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ABSTRACT

Since its foundation in 1968, the Adult Literacy League of Orlando, Florida, has dedicated itself to eradicating the educational handicaps of more than 2,575 local residents. The League, which in 1975 became part of the Open Campus of Valencia Community College (VCC), offers two courses: (1) a Literacy Tutor Training Workshop, a 10-hour program to train volunteer members of the community to teach basic reading and writing to adult non-readers; and (2) Developmental Reading, a course taught by volunteer tutors on a one-to-one basis. The students, who represent a small proportion of the estimated 30,000 functional illiterates in Orange County, are asked to commit themselves to stay in the program for 1 year, to set aside time for homework and lessons, and to pay a modest price for course materials. Program implementation involves the identification and recruitment of non-readers, recruitment and training of tutors, matching of students and tutors, and follow-up assistance for tutors. As it enters its 15th year of operation, challenges facing the League include finding fresh ways to reach those ill-equipped with survival skills, strengthening its efforts, and extending its public relations thrust. Appended materials include information on the cooperative relations between the League and VCC, a profile of the 67 students currently enrolled in the program, and a statement of agreement between the League and VCC. (HB)

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THE ADULT LITERACY LEAGUE

AND

THE CENTER FOR ADULT LITERACY

Materials Prepared by

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and

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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1982

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ADULT LITERACY LEAGUE

APPLICATION SUBMITTED TO WALT DISNEY WORLD

for the

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM

"LIVES WITHOUT CHOICES"*

A life of illiteracy is a life without choices, a life without productive participation in the victim's world. Statistics of the on-going illiteracy problem are impressive, critical, and alarming. In the United States alone, more than 25 million adults are functionally illiterate; one in five Americans age 16 and older lacks the basic skills and knowledge to be a competent citizen, worker, or parent. Fifth-grade reading material is out of reach of half of prison inmates, and an estimated 50 percent of the nation's unemployed young people between the age of 16 and 21 read only at fourth-grade level or below!

And when these statistics are translated into reality in the trauma of the young mother who cannot read the directions on her daughter's medicine bottle, or the embarrassment of the father who turns down a job promotion, or the terror of the student lest he be called upon to read aloud...then these statistics become crippling factors for individuals as well as for society.

Yes, the case for the defense of the fight against illiteracy, with its association with poverty, hunger, disease, and crime, is well documented. "If left unarrested, rampant illiteracy will create an unlettered underclass that will be locked out of tomorrow's economy.."**

Since its formation in 1968, the Adult Literacy League has dedicated itself vigorously to the eradication of educational handicaps for more than 2575 residents of the community. Volunteer tutors, trained by specialists in a ten-hour workshop, use a one-to-one teaching approach made famous and employed by Laubach Literacy Action with which the Orlando unit is associated. Last year, the Adult Literacy League held ten workshops and trained 163 tutors.

*See attached material
**Quoted from New York Times Company
August 19, 1982

Where do the students come from?

Of the estimated 30,000 functional illiterates in Orange County, some are housewives, some are stroke victims, some are mentally retarded, some are migrant workers. In a current profile of the 67 students enrolled, 27 occupations were identified - all representing unskilled labor. The League offers hope to myriad people who abide on the fringe of our culture.

All students are asked to make a commitment. They are encouraged to set aside a specific time each week for lessons, to do homework, to plan to stay with the program for at least a year; and they are "required" to pay for their own books, a modest $15.00 for the set. Great emphasis is placed on keeping appointments with the tutor.

Where do the tutors come from?

They are interested members of the community. Retirees, school teachers, business persons, and housewives who willingly devote time and energy toward seeing others succeed.

What happens in implementation of the program?

There are four main steps in the process: Identification and recruiting of non-readers, recruiting and training of tutors, matching of students and tutors, and follow-up assistance to tutors.

Trainers and the twenty-four members of the Board of Directors donate countless hours in planning and supporting the officers, the coordinator, the learners, and the tutors. The League is particularly proud of the fact that it receives no financial aid from government agencies or United Way. Valencia Community College does provide the salary of the part-time director and lends logistical aid and publicity. The First Presbyterian Church allows rent-free use of space for the lending library, meetings, and workshops; Telephone Secretaries, Inc., and local media deserve special gratitude for their efforts and support.

However, more needs to be done in order to reach those who are illiterate. Literacy groups for years have trained thousands of volunteers to help under

educated adults. According to a 1979 report of the Ford Foundation, "Only two-to-four percent of illiterates ever enter the program." A massive campaign is being launched on the national level labeled Coalition for Literacy--a newly formed alliance of volunteer groups, businesses, and public service organizations - in recognition of the widespread lack of participation.

The Adult Literacy League has long grappled with the problem identified above. We, too, need to explore fresh ways of getting our message to those who seek to survive, though ill-equipped with the proper skills. How can our efforts be strengthened? Made more effective? These are the questions we are asking as we enter our fifteenth year of operation. We desperately need answers.

The award money would be utilized for an extensive public relations thrust to reach the non-readers in our area. Thus, we might incease the hope of those sentenced to a life without choices.

ADULT LITERACY LEAGUE

at Valencia Community College

Post Office Box 90
Orlando, Florida 32802
Phone (305) 425-6983

On June 23, 1975, a Statement of Agreement was signed establishing a Center for Adult Literacy at Valencia Community College in Orlando, Florida. That marked the beginning of a happy "marriage" between the college and the Adult Literacy League, a member council of Laubach Literacy Action, in which the League maintains a certain degree of independence while using the resources of the college.

This merger came after seven years of independent operation by the League. The League initiated the concept of the union of the two organizations which was met with favorable response by the college.

Under the agreement, the League is a part of the Open Campus of the college. The Open Campus is a campus without walls, dedicated to meeting the full spectrum of the educational needs of its community. By working with the League, the Open Campus fulfills one of its objectives, i.e., providing basic and developmental programs to give students needing academic assistance a greater chance for success. The merger of the college and the League is a mutually beneficial arrangement. . . . .with the adult non-readers in the community reaping the rewards.

Administrative support by the college includes a base of operations, telephone, clerical assistance, office supplies, equipment, printing, postage, etc. College personnel with expertise in graphic arts, community relations, management, and counseling are available to the League.

Perhaps one of the greatest aides to the League is the salary paid to its part-time coordinator by the college. Having this position salaried gives stability to the volunteer organization. The main responsibilities of the coordinator are to supervise the volunteer program of the League and to serve as a liaison between the college and the League.

Through the college, the Adult Literacy League offers two courses: Literacy Tutor Training Workshop and Developmental Reading. In the Tutor Training Workshop, volunteers are trained in the Laubach method of teaching basic reading and writing to adult nonreaders. Developmental Reading is taught by the volunteer tutors on a one-to-one basis.

The League has also assisted in developing literacy programs in other parts of the state with support from the college. The President of the college wrote to other community college presidents in the state introducing the literacy outreach program. When requests are received from individuals within another college district, a follow-up letter is sent describing the services the League has been asked to provide and encourages that college to consider establishing its own literacy program in cooperation with interested citizens. Barbara Roper, a trustee of Laubach Literacy Action, serves as a Literacy Consultant for the college with responsibility for representing the League and the college in this outreach program.

There is no doubt that the marriage of the college and the League has served the needs of the community. The college benefits by fulfilling its stated mission "to provide comprehensive post-secondary education and lifelong learning opportunities that foster individual growth and community development." Conversely, the support of the college has strengthened the volunteer organization. Together they have served the educational needs of a segment of the community not previously met by the college.

If further information is desired, please write:

Mrs. Floride Nelson, Coordinator
Adult Literacy League at
Valencia Community College
Post Office Box 90
Orlando, Florida 32802

CENTER FOR ADULT LITERACY

A summary of students enrolled in Developmental Reading offered by the Center for Adult Literacy League during Session II, 1982-83 is outlined below.

A PROFILE OF LITERACY STUDENTS

Sex:	36	Male	31	Female
Age:	1	17-20	37	21-44
	25	45-64	4	over 64

Years of School Completed:	2	none	16	1-4	18	5-8
	11	9-11	9	12	1	Post-Secondary
					10	Unknown*

*Most students in this category are from foreign countries.

Ethnic Background:	2	American Indian	3	Hispanic
	30	Black	26	White
	6	Asian	___	Unknown

Employment:	47	Employed	20	Not Employed

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTED

Kitchen helper
Chicken farm manager
Custodian
Fruit picker
Yard worker
Tour bus driver
Feed loader
Construction worker
Baby sitter
Truck driver
Heavy equipment operator
Paper handler
Waitress
Housekeeper
Cook
Meat cutter
Bar maid
Machinist
Postal worker
Fruit packer
Carpet installer
Foliage nursery worker
Laundry worker
Fiberglass worker
Cashier
Carpenter
Dietary aide

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT
ON
CENTER FOR ADULT LITERACY AT VALENCIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This is a statement of agreement between the Adult Literacy League, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "the League") and The District Board of Trustees of Valencia Community College (hereinafter referred to as "the College") to establish a Center for Adult Literacy at Valencia Community College (hereinafter referred to as "the Center").

1. The Center shall be established for those purposes stated herein and the purposes enumerated in the League by-laws in effect on the date when the College executes this agreement, except that the Center shall not borrow money or issue evidences of indebtedness in furtherance of any objects of its business, nor secure any such indebtedness by mortgage, pledge or lien.

2. The League board of directors shall continue as the governing body of the League. The Provost of the Open Campus of Valencia Community College or a representative designated by him, shall serve as an ex-officio director on the League board of directors.

3. The College shall provide the Center the following:

   a. Use of a central reception area.

   b. Administrative office space as available near the College downtown center.

   c. Utilities and operational funds as available and necessary to achieve the purposes of this agreement.

   d. Office furniture and equipment as available.

4. The Center shall serve the community by finding interested illiterates and semi-illiterates and teaching them to read and write. The Center shall publicize its activity as related to both students and tutors, coordinate the training of tutors and refer interested students to trained tutors.

5. The Center shall serve as a clearing house to coordinate, advise and disseminate information to similarly purposed organizations within the Central Florida area and maintain liaison with appropriate state and national literacy organizations.

6. There shall be no charge to students or tutor-trainees, except for material to be used for teaching and learning.

7. This agreement may be terminated by either party hereto upon thirty (30) days prior written notice to the other party or by written agreement between the parties hereto without prior notice.

Adult Literacy League, Inc.

Daniel F. Cahill Jr.

President

June 23, 1975

Date

(Seal)

The District Board of Trustees of Valencia Community College

Chairman

June 18, 1975

Date

(Seal)

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
8118 Math-Sciences Building
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024

MAY 20 1983